

AMDI7\_098 4/15/08

**Bell, Leanne S (DOT)**

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**From:** Charles Piedra [capiedra3@gmail.com]  
**To:** Monday, April 14, 2008 8:18 AM  
**Subject:** DOT STIP  
**Attachments:** oppose Juneau road  
DOT more road comments 4-14-08.docx

Subject: Oppose the Juneau Road Extension

Date: 14 April 2008

We are Juneau residents who oppose the plan to extend the Juneau road north through Berner's Bay and along northern Lynn Canal. We oppose the plan because for environmental, aesthetic, and socioeconomic reasons and we have already commented extensively on this project through the EIS process.

We don't think DOT or the permitting agencies have even begun to adequately estimate the environmental cost, especially in the rich estuarine areas in Berner's Bay and the Katzeihin River. We depend on this area's rich salmon fisheries, and this project along with so many others will continue to degrade the quality of salmon habitat and diminish salmon productivity over the long term. Besides salmon, disruption of the areas along the proposed roadway will also harm other key species, their habitats, and the entire ecosystem and all the services and values that a clean, functioning ecosystem provides, at cost not even mentioned in most of the planning documents.

We think that the current mode of access via the Lynn Canal ferries is ideal for this area. Despite the persistent and vocal demands of a minority of Juneau residents and others who favor the road at any cost, the existing transportation system from upper Lynn Canal to Juneau appears to be more than adequate. Ferries are rarely full in off-season months, and additional ferries in the summer appear to be handling the traffic quite well. The convenience of travelling by ferry is in many ways much greater than what it would be with a dangerous road and ferry shuttle. Access to those who do not want to drive between Juneau and Haines or Skagway, which is easy and convenient with the present system, will be totally cut off.

As for access to the capital city, we live in the modern world where the vast majority of business travelers fly anyway, even when roads are available. The likelihood that more than a handful of people from other parts of the state would drive to Juneau to do their business in the capital is very small, certainly disproportionate to the cost of the road.

At present, the costs of this project are severely underestimated, and funding for the project, even at this unrealistically low estimated cost, are not identified. **The project needs to be removed from from the STIP until DOT can show a "reasonable expectation of full project funding". DOT cannot show a "reasonable expectation of full project funding" until it comes up with a realistic cost estimate. DOT cannot make a realistic cost estimate until the geotechnical work begun by Golder Associates is completed so that DOT knows where the final alignment will be, where tunnels are needed, the extent of blasting and retaining walls, and so on.**

**The bottom line is, Alaska can't afford this unnecessary road because there are more urgent needs for our dwindling transportation dollars.** The roads and highways we have in the Juneau area are poorly maintained and inadequate for inter-city needs. Unsafe conditions in

our community are much more urgent need than a new road project which we can't afford and itself will create extreme, new hazards.

**Again, we oppose the Juneau road extension and expect DOT to come up with realistic cost estimates before proceeding further.**

Jan Conitz and Charles Piedra  
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